

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 7-9 have been canceled, claim 1 has been amended to replace "laminating" by "contacting" and to recite that the polarizer comprises a stretched polymer film made of dyed hydrophilic polymer film, without using an adhesive, and claim 11 has been amended to correct "polarizer" by "protective". The paragraph starting on page 3, line 12 of the specification has been amended accordingly to recite "laminating, i.e., contacting". It is submitted that support for these amendments is immediately derived from the original application, in particular on page 6, last full paragraph and page 8, last paragraph. Further, claims 16-18 have been added. Additional support for claims 16-18 is also found on page 6, last full paragraph and page 8, last paragraph.

Claims 1-6 and 10-18 are pending in the present application. Independent claim 1, and claims 2-6 and 10-15 dependent directly or indirectly thereon, are directed to a manufacturing method of a polarizing film. Independent claims 16-18 are also directed to a manufacturing method of a polarizing film.

As a preliminary, in the Office Action, a restriction requirement between a species of process claims 1-6 and 10-15 and a species of product claims 7-9 is set forth.

The provisional election of the species of process claims 1-6 and 10-15 without prejudice is hereby confirmed. Accordingly, product claims 7-9 have been cancelled.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1-6 and 10-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. It is alleged in the Office Action that "laminating" is incorrect because the films are only "contacted" and not "laminated per se" until thermocompression occurs.

The term "laminating" by "contacting" in claim 1 as suggested in the Office Action, without changing the scope of the claims. Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by either US 3,322,601 (Wong), US 3,772,128 (Kahn), or US 3,208,902 (Arond), claims 3, 5, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over either of Wong, Kahn, or Arond, and claims 11-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over either of Wong, Kahn or Arond in view of US 4,370,374 (Raabe).

It is alleged in the Office Action that each of Wong, Kahn and Arond discloses a thermocompression-bonded laminate including a polarizer and a protective film. With respect to claims 11-15, it is further alleged that Raabe suggests the protective film having two layers with different melting points.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. None of the cited references teaches or suggests a polarizer using a stretched film and a dyed hydrophilic polymer film or a polarizer having a thickness of about 5 to about 80 microns without adhesive. Specifically, the teachings of Wong and Kahn regarding thermocompression bonding are limited to thick foamed plastic polarizers (see in particular Wong at col. 2, line 70 and Kahn at col. 1, lines 33-34), and further, Arond shows that otherwise a person of ordinary skill in the art would have used adhesive (see in particular Arond at col. 2, line 47).

In contrast, in the present invention as claimed in present claims 1, 16, and 17, dyed hydrophilic polymer film is used (claims 1 and 16) and/or a polarizer having a thickness of about 5 to about 80 microns is used (claim 17), and the protective film and the polarizer are contacted

without using an adhesive. These features and their advantages are not disclosed in any of the cited references. Therefore, present claims 1-6 and 10-17 are not obvious over any combination of the cited references.

Further, regarding present claim 18 (and claims 11-15 dependent on claim 1), it is submitted that the protective films of Raabe having layers of high and low softening points, respectively, are adhered to each other. In other words, the protective films of Raabe are adhered to each other with the help of the layers having high and low softening points. In contrast, in the presently claimed invention, the protective film comprising at least two layers having different softening points is bonded onto at least one face of a polarizer without using an adhesive as recited in present claim 18. This feature is not taught or suggested in Raabe, which concerns a very different field of endeavor, and the other cited references fail to remedy this deficiency of Raabe. Therefore, present claim 18 (as well as claims 11-15 for this reason alone) is not obvious over any combination of the cited references.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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